

NSC BRIEFING

31 July 1968

MIDDLE EAST

I. Necessity of two ballots to elect Shihab is indication of depth of differences within ^{Lebanon} country. Shihab's election is unlikely to heal wounds of long rebellion and extremists on both sides can be expected to continue their agitation. But fighting expected to cease.

A. Present cabinet likely to resign. Opposition will press for Chamoun's immediate resignation.

B. Rebel manifesto issued Tuesday reflects psychological boost that Iraqi rebellion has given Moslem/Arab nationalists.

1. Manifesto called for revision of basic structure of Lebanese politics, by demanding that half of govt jobs go to Moslems and that constituencies for expanded parliament be geographic rather than based on religious affiliation.

2. Manifesto also called for a "genuine Arab policy"--euphemism for alignment with Nasir.

C. Rebel leaders can be expected to continue to work for these objectives and thus increase Christian fears of Moslem domination.

D. Shihab, [] believes that Nasirism is the "wave of the future" will attempt to rule by a policy of compromise with the various factions. After a time he may become "fed up" and step out. 25X6

II. Jordanian government still trying hard to keep lid on, but hampered by:

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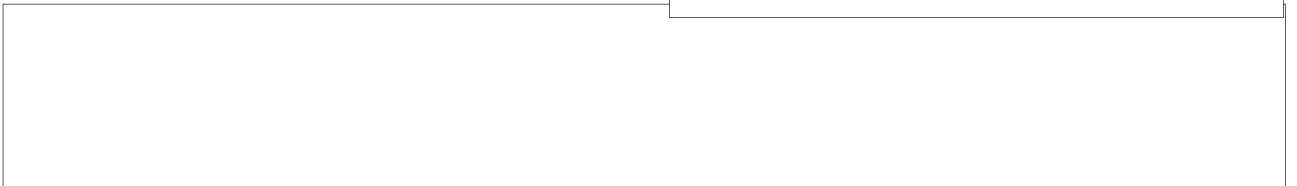
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B. Dissonance in court circles around King Husayn.

- 1. Somewhat ominous presence of pro-Egyptian ex-Minister Malqi in Husayn's entourage.**



IV. UAR support for Iraq continues.



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- VI. Israeli military remain alert, but no new steps toward mobilisation have been reported.
- A. Israeli foreign ministry appears to be somewhat uncertain of what future course ought to be.

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B. Some thought obviously being given by Israelis about adopting a more neutralist posture to try to escape being further tarred as an "imperialist."

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